

# California Arthritis Fact Sheet (2005)



## What is Arthritis?

The term “arthritis” covers more than 100 diseases and conditions affecting joints, the surrounding tissues, and other connective tissues. Arthritis and other rheumatic conditions include osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, systemic lupus erythematosus, juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, gout, bursitis, rheumatic fever, Lyme arthritis, carpal tunnel disease and other disorders.

- **Arthritis** is confirmed by a physician diagnosis.
- **Possible arthritis** is characterized by pain, aching or stiffness in or around a joint within the past 30 days.
- **Chronic arthritis** is defined as having been present for 3 or more months.

## Who is Affected by Arthritis?

- Over 46 million adults report doctor-diagnosed arthritis.
- Arthritis or chronic joint symptoms affects nearly one out of every three adults, or about 70 million Americans.
- Over two thirds of people with arthritis are younger than 65 years of age.
- By the year 2030, an estimated 67 million adults aged 18 years and older will have doctor-diagnosed arthritis.
- Approximately 285,000 or 0.5% of young people under the age of 17 are affected by arthritis.
- Arthritis is the leading cause of disability in the United States.
- Arthritis limits everyday activities such as walking and dressing for more than 19 million Americans.
- Over 10 million adults with chronic joint symptoms had never seen a health-care provider for their condition.
- Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) is a serious form of rheumatic disease that can affect several organs. Death rates from SLE are 3 times more likely in African American women aged 45-64 years than White women.

## Risk Factors for Arthritis

- **Gender:** Women make up nearly 60% of arthritis cases.
- **Age:** Nearly 60% of the elderly population has arthritis. Risk increases with age.
- **Genetic Predisposition:** Certain genes are known to be associated with a higher risk of some types of arthritis.
- **Lyme Disease:** Approximately 60% of patients with untreated Lyme disease will develop Lyme arthritis.
- **Obesity:** Obesity is associated with gout in men and osteoarthritis of the knee, hip and hand in women.
- **Joint Injuries:** Sports injuries, occupational injuries and repetitive joint use injuries can increase the risk of arthritis.

## Cost of Arthritis

- Each year, arthritis results in 39 million physician visits, 750,000 hospitalizations and 44 million ambulatory care visits. 68% of these visits were by persons under 65 years of age.
- In 2003, the national direct and indirect costs for arthritis totaled \$128 billion up from \$86.2 billion in 1997. Direct costs for arthritis was over \$80 billion and the indirect costs for arthritis was \$47 billion.

## California Data

- More than 5.6 million adults or 22% of California's adult population report they have doctor-diagnosed arthritis.
- Nearly 57% of adults over 65 years of age and 32% of adults ages 45 to 64 report having doctor-diagnosed arthritis.
- Approximately 27% of women and 18% of men have arthritis (California state statistics comparable to national statistics).
- 39% of adults with arthritis have activity limitations due to arthritis or joint symptoms.
- In 2003, the total costs of arthritis care in California was over \$12 billion.

## Key Public Health Messages

### ***Develop Your Skills!***

The Arthritis Foundation Self-Help Program and the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program have been proven to reduce arthritis-related pain by 20% and decrease physician visits by 43%. These programs involve small group education with a focus on problem solving, exercise, relaxation and communication.

### ***Be Active!***

Regular, moderate physical activity maintains joint health, relieves symptoms, improves functions, reduces joint swelling, increases pain threshold, and improves energy levels. Several effective physical activity programs are available for people with arthritis. These programs include the Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program, which has been shown to improve self efficacy in participants and the Arthritis Foundation Aquatics Program.

### ***Manage Your Weight!***

An average of 11 pounds can reduce the risk of knee osteoarthritis by as much as 50%. Physical activity and a low-fat diet are key to weight management.

### ***Seek Therapy!***

Physical and occupational therapy can help improve function and minimize activity limitations.

### ***See Your Doctor!***

Medications for some types of arthritis can limit disease progression, control symptoms, and prevent serious complications.

### ***Consider Replacements Options!***

Joint replacement therapy often reduces pain and improves activity.

## ***The California Arthritis Program***

In response to the recommendations of the National Arthritis Action Plan (NAAP), the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion established cooperative agreements with state health departments to develop state-based programs to improve the quality of life among people with arthritis.

## ***California Arthritis Foundation Chapters***

[www.arthritis.org](http://www.arthritis.org)

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### ***San Diego Area Chapter***

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## ***California Arthritis Partnership Program (CAPP)***

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